



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL  
OFFICE OF STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATION



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Page 1

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 28, 2003 MEETING OF  
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

Chairman Carozza called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners' Brammer, Haber, Kowalski, Maheu, Milewski Nicol, Ouellette, Stankye and Wilkinson. Commissioners' Gomeau, Johnson, McDonald, and Vendetta were excused. Staff members Morrissette, O'Neil, Ouellette, Piechota and Piskura were present.

Attendees took a moment to pledge allegiance to the American flag.

Mr. Morrissette introduced the guests to the meeting as Rick Willard and Garrett Hughes from ICAN, Ted Schroll, Legislative Representative for CSFA, Paul Rapanault, Legislative Representative for UPFFA and Gordon Shand from the Department of Public Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2002 meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wilkinson to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2002 meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2002 meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Milewski to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2002 meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to approve the Staff Report for the period of September 15 – October 14, 2002 meeting.

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A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to approve Staff Report for the period of September 15 – October 14, 2002. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to approve the Staff Report for the period of October 15 – November 14, 2002.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Milewski to approve the Staff Report for the period of October 15 – November 14, 2002. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to approve the Staff Report for the period of November 15 – December 14, 2002

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wilkinson to approve the Staff Report for the period of November 15 – December 14, 2002. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to approve the Staff Report for the period of December 15 – January 14, 2002.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Haber to approve the Staff Report for the period of December 15 – January 14, 2002. Motion carried.

Mr. Morrisette presented certificates of recognition for ten years of state service to staff members Mark Lewandowski, Edward O’Hurley and Kimberly Singer.

Moving to item 4 a.) Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the agency budget and staffing. He stated that on January 3 the agency lost one clerical employee and one trainer on January 17 layoff. In addition, two Trainers were notified that they were “At Risk” to be bumped by more senior Trainers from other agencies. As a result of bumping we did in fact lose another trainer. The Administrator stated that he worked with both the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Labor Relations to seek a waiver from the bumping provision of the contract for our Trainers who possess special certifications. The Union denied our request for a waiver.

Mr. Piskura commended Mr. Morrisette for all his efforts in trying to obtain a waiver to the bumping provision of the contract.

A question and answer period followed.

Moving to item 4 b.) Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the CSFA Education Committee and Mission Delineation Agreement. He stated at the November meeting of the CSFA Education Committee the group voted unanimously to adopt the CFA/Regional Fire School Mission Delineation Agreement in its entirety. Due to the lack of a quorum at the

November meeting, the Commission was not able to formally vote to adopt the agreement. He asked Commissioners if they had any questions and requested they vote today to adopt the agreement.

Commissioner Wilkinson stated that the committee is still actively pursuing the regional school plan and demonstrating a cooperative effort and a united front.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to adopt the Mission Delineation Agreement.

A discussion period followed.

Motion carried.

Moving to item 4 c.) Mr. Morrisette stated that a letter announcing the Foam Trailer Program has been drafted and is awaiting mailing to fire chiefs statewide. Currently there is a holdup on the local level with a couple of the host towns. We hope to move forward soon once local training is completed and procedures are in place. It appears there are no problems with the MOU's submitted to the host fire departments. We are addressing some minor problems with the vendor.

Commissioner Wilkinson stated that Mr. Morrisette and the other members of the Foam Trailer Program Committee should be commended for all their work.

Moving to item 4 d.) Mr. Morrisette stated a copy of the FY 2000/01 Audit Report was distributed to Commissioners as part of their December packages. He asked whether any Commissioners had any questions regarding the Auditors recommendations. He also asked consideration of acceptance of the report.

Commissioner Ouellette inquired about the status of the Auditors equipment inventory recommendations.

Mr. O'Neil stated the agency has developed specifications and will soon bid on an asset tracking system. Acquisition of this system will aid in meeting the Auditors recommendation.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Kowalski to accept the Audit Report for FY 2000/01. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 a.) to New Business Mr. Morrisette invited Mr. Rick Willard to present an overview of a new program from the National Heritage Foundation. This program will permit both volunteer and career fire departments to establish, with ease, a foundation on a local level which can aid in raising funds for a variety of purposes.

Mr. Willard has previously conducted a presentation for the National Volunteer Fire Council at their Board Meeting in Baltimore

Mr. Willard thanked the Commission for giving him and Mr. Garrett Hughes the opportunity to talk about a program called "I Care America Network" (ICAN/ICARE). He stated that there is, right now, a preplanning effort going on at the National level to develop a program for disaster relief within the fire service. This program is primarily to provide the infrastructure to raise funds rapidly, to mitigate the losses effecting firefighters and their families in the event of another incident of the 9/11 magnitude.

The National effort underway is not so concerned with having large sums of money being stored, just in case, but to have an established procedure and infrastructure to raise funds quickly and more important, to see that the funds are made available in a more expeditious manner and for the intended use. At the local level a fund is established to provide relief on a localized level where state, regional or national assistance is not required nor should be. Several levels of funding could provide a larger pool, for state and regional use and provide the initial "first on the scene" relief while the larger infrastructure is put in motion to provide the funding for the major requirements. Local organizations would draw from local funds next (if required) and additional fund raising efforts can be initiated at the level required.

Initial funding can be derived from local government allocations, fund raising functions and more importantly from charitable gifting from individuals or organizations that have a new heightened awareness and propensity to help support a newly recognized group of heroes that put their lives on the line on a daily basis.

A question and answer period followed.

Moving to item 5 b.) Mr. Morrissette gave a legislative update.

Mr. Rapanault, Legislative Representation for the Uniformed Professional Firefighters of Connecticut (UPFFA) provided a detailed overview of a legislative proposal to merge the Department of Public Health's, Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) with the Commission and invited Commissioners to express their concerns. He stated this proposal is being spearheaded by the UPFFA and is consistent with the IAFF's support and encouragement of fire based EMS. While details need to be worked out, the general direction will be to combine the two systems to provide a more stable environment for EMS issues to be managed. Mr. Rapanault asked Commissioners for their input with the issue of merging EMS with the Commission.

A lengthy discussion period followed with the primary point being concerns expressed by Commissioners that any consolidation cannot negatively impact the gains made on behalf of the fire service.

Chairman Carozza stated that a sub-committee should be established to represent the Commission and oversee activities pertaining to this matter.

Moving to item 5 c.) Damaged Equipment, Mr. Piskura reported on the damage of up to ten SCBA cylinders during the Fall Recruit Class. During one of the training evolutions, students were performing drags and other rescue techniques of other firefighters. The training was conducted in the fire station where the floor had been recently improved with an epoxy non-slip surface. Unfortunately the instructors overseeing the training did not recognize that the coating on the fiber bottles was being abraded. Departments notified us the bottles could not be hydrostatically tested and could not be repaired. It is clear that we are responsible for the damage. We've contacted the affected departments and appraised them of the claim process. This process could take over a year to be reimbursed and there is no guarantee. As a good will gesture, we've offered to reduce the tuition cost of any future recruits by an equivalent amount.

This is being brought to the Commission's attention for consideration of a policy to address the issue of damaged equipment beyond normal wear and tear.

Chairman Carozza directed the staff to develop a draft policy for consideration at a future meeting.

Mr. Morrissette thanked Mr. Piskura for his work on drafting the Mission Delineation agreement.

Mr. Morrissette reminded and informed the Commissioners of the following:

- The Connecticut Fire Chief's Association meeting being held tonight at the Aqua Turf is being cosponsored by the Joint Council. Representatives from the DPS-Homeland Security Division and Military Department will be in attendance.
- Michael Grant was appointed Fire Chief in New Haven. Chief Grant was an active member of the Foam Trailer Committee.
- A demonstration of the Segway will be held at the Academy at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, January 31. An open invitation was extended to all fire departments. Commissioners are welcome.
- An updated Fire Act Grants report is included in commission package.
- Issue brought up at a recent staff meeting regarding funds allocated to planned facility projects vs. staff layoffs.
- Update of planned improvements to burn building and damage incurred as a result of a recent fire in that building.
- Two decontamination trailers purchased through a grant from the Department of Justice have been delivered to the Academy for the Homeland Security Department. Training will be conducted in early March and the trailers will then be sent to the host communities. Several more trailers are due in soon.

Chairman Carozza stated that he and Administrator Morrissette recently met with Senator Dodd. He found the Senator to be very supportive of fire service issues

Commissioner Kowalski inquired if any additional information was available on the tax abatement issues.

Mr. Morrissette stated that he had discussed the issue with the Senator who indicated that this issue would be brought forth once again in the new Congress. Congressman Larson will sponsor this legislation on the House side.

Chairman Carozza asked for volunteers to serve on the EMS Commission Sub-Committee.

Commissioners' Kowalski and Wilkinson volunteered to serve on this sub-committee. They will monitor the legislative activity on this issue.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ouellette to go into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Motion carried.

No action was taken or motion made and the Executive Session was closed.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wilkinson to close the Executive Session and return to the normal order of business. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Milewski to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.